

CHAPTER 7

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Overview

This chapter focuses on the Town's various public-facilities and services exclusive of public parks which are discussed in Chapter 10. These include: the Town Hall/Government Center; the seven existing public schools, Emergency Services—including Police Protection, Darien Emergency Medical Services (Post 53), and the three all-volunteer Fire Departments, Library, the Senior Activities Center, the Town Garage, Sewer Services and the pump stations, Water Supply and the Teen Center.

Since expansions to these facilities are major capital projects, it is imperative that the Town consider and understand what is needed over the next 10 years. Since the last Town Plan, a number of projects were undertaken--expansion was completed at Middlesex Middle School and a new high school is in the process of being constructed. Interior renovations and improvements have occurred at the library, Town Hall, and the sewer pump stations, and additions completed at the Post 53 (EMS) building on Ledge Road. A number of sewer extensions have been completed throughout the community, while others are currently under consideration.

Appendix A7 outlines needs for additional space for the Police Department, and notes that a recent 600 square foot addition to the Post 53 building on Ledge Road met their need for enlargement of existing bathrooms and the establishment of sleeping quarters. The Appendix also outlines a similar need for sleeping quarters at the various firehouses.

The largest new facility now in the planning stages is a new Tokeneke elementary school to replace the existing school. The second largest project will be the construction of a new Darien Library, which will use primarily private funds to complete construction.

Policies

To ensure that space needs and the need for community services are adequately met for the planning period. This may include: upgrading or renovating existing buildings; adding on to existing buildings to meet demonstrated needs; and/or constructing entirely new buildings where appropriate.

To ensure that speed humps and other traffic calming devices do not cut significantly into response times for the three Fire Departments.

To maintain the Senior Activities Center in its existing building, or establish a permanent alternative site.

To provide the community with an adequately sized library with adequate parking for library activities.

To ensure well-defined, and consistently and fairly implemented sewer policies relative to future sanitary sewer extensions.

To ensure adequate water supply, and improvement of the current system relative to distribution, pressure, quality and related factors.

Recommendations

As noted in Appendix A7, a number of other facilities are in need of replacement, renovation and/or expansion over the next ten years, including the Police Station, Darien Library, one or more of the Fire Stations, the Town Garage, and Town Hall. With this in mind, the following are recommended:

Encourage a comprehensive analysis of the space needs at Town Hall. Grants should continue to be pursued to offset the costs of improving this facility.

Consider the purchase or lease of the present Darien Library property as it plans its move to a new site.

Study the existing Senior Center facility, and make a determination on how to proceed—whether to continue repairing and renovating the existing building, or whether to consider alternate locations for a new Senior Center. The Appendix lists some of the repairs that are needed to the existing building.

Monitor the capacity of the existing sanitary sewer system with respect to approval of any future extensions, whether Sewer Commission or developer initiated. If the existing system is at capacity, no further sewer extensions should be approved.

Continue to make necessary repairs and improvements at the various pump stations throughout the community.

Sell or give away the pump station that is surrounded by the Avalon Darien property off of Hollow Tree Ridge Road.